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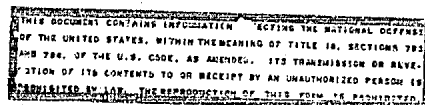
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COMMENTS BY STEFAN JEDRYCHOWSKI, VICE-PRESIDENT OF POLAND,
ON THE MANPOWER PROBLEM AT NOWA HUTA

The following information is taken from one of 28 commentaries made by dignitaries of the PZPR (United Polish Workers' Party) at the Seventh Plenum of its Central Committee, held 14-15 June 1952. Each of the commentaries is an amplification of President Beirut's opening speech and was presumably edited by Nowe Drogi.

In the following commentary by Stefan Jedrychowski, Vice-President of Poland, the outspoken and specific nature of the criticism of manpower shortages at Nowa Huta may be of particular interest. The poor recruitment of manpower, lack of training facilities for available manpower, poor housing conditions, and far-removed commissaries impede the progress of construction. Arresting too, is the statement that "...none of us have learned how to direct large-scale construction."

This year is a decisive one in the realization of the Six-Year Plan. Among the plan's principal objectives, large construction must be set in motion on schedule.

Industrial construction is one of the key problems of 1952. Even compared to the 1951 high standard of fulfillment, the goal of the 1952 plan is nearly 40 percent higher. It must be admitted that although the obligations increase, the means are limited. The tasks are not fulfilled at many construction sites. Jobs lag behind the plan, and completion dates are postponed. What are the reasons for this state of affairs?

Construction plans do not receive the same treatment as industrial plans. Our tolerant attitude toward unfulfilled construction plans may cast some light on the situation. Another reason may be our naive belief in the spontaneous fulfillment of the construction plan, in the possibility of the unlimited development of the construction potential without any attention from us. Operational shortcomings are evident in the construction plans. Daily progress reports on plan fulfillment are nonexistent.

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Wojewodstwo and powiat committees, as well as party organizations, have learned how to manage industrial plants; however, their interest in construction remains spasmodic.

The presidiums of the wojewodstwo people's councils, who are the local authorities, have not learned to regard state construction projects as their own responsibility. They have not, therefore, given them any attention. The local activists still oppose any concentrated investment effort. They began to build schools and houses of culture which the plan did not call for. These were never finished because the local activists ran out of enthusiasm and resources.

The three large constructions begun in Lodz are typical examples of this kind of scattered investment effort. The plan did not call for these buildings. The local activists began them but did not follow through to their completion. A proper pooling of their efforts would have resulted in one of the buildings being completed and another nearing completion by now.

The accent on large construction projects points out the necessity for assembling money, manpower, equipment, and materials. There must be concentrated party activity and propaganda, concentrated effort on distribution problems, political indoctrination, and health programs at large construction projects. So far, these have been lacking. These inadequacies are especially glaring in Rzeszow, Kielce, Lublin, and Krakow wojewodstvos.

It is disquieting to know that Nova Huta, our largest construction project, has not fulfilled its plan for the last few months. To be sure, plan fulfillment grows from month to month. Despite this, the management of Nova Huta has been unable to make up the failures of the winter months. What is lacking at Nova Huta? It cannot be a deficiency of technical and engineering personnel, since Nova Huta is second to none in this respect.

It cannot be a lack of equipment, since Nova Huta boasts of more heavy construction equipment than any other project in Poland. It has more excavators than the Soviet work plan called for, and it is well known that Soviet construction standards call for more equipment than Polish standards.

The PRPG (Panstwowa Komisja Planowania Gospodarczego, State Economic Planning Commission) has been blamed for not delivering any bulldozers for the last 3½ months. The PRPG has no ready-made bulldozers. We do not produce them in Poland yet. We import them and distribute them to those parts of the construction industry where the need is most urgent. We might add that those bulldozers that Nova Huta does have are laid up for repairs. This is caused by poor maintenance of equipment and high turnover of equipment operators.

Is there a lack of materials? Nova Huta has never suffered from a serious lack of them. To be sure, in 1951 the late delivery of structural steel had some effect on the plan fulfillment. However, this has not happened in 1952.

As for housing, Nova Huta is the most favored project in Poland. Every year, about 7,500 rooms, or their equivalent in collective quarters, are available for occupancy at Nova Huta.

What, then, is Nova Huta's problem?

Nova Huta lacks manpower. Our Krakow colleagues ask all Poland to help supply the Nova Huta manpower requirements. But who, we might ask, is to supply the manpower, when Krakow itself has a manpower surplus? Would it be Slask, or the city of Warsaw, or the wojewodstvos of the western territories, or Kielce, Lublin, and Rzeszow? These areas have their own manpower problems.

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How can we account for Krakow Wojewodztwo's inability to mobilize the few thousand workers needed at Nowa Huta?

Unpleasant overtones emanate from some of the local activists. Perhaps fatigue, perhaps disinterest in conquering the difficulties experienced by industrialization is responsible for this unjustifiable spirit. A similar atmosphere pervades the other wojewodztwos.

For example, the least amount of industrialization in all of Poland is planned for Lublin Wojewodztwo. Nevertheless, Lublin seems unable to furnish the manpower from its own area which is necessary to construct industrial plants and housing projects. This does not mean that there are no manpower reserves in that section.

Manpower reserves must be found in Krakow, Kielce, Lublin, and Rzeszow wojewodztwos. We must try to find new methods and new forms of organization to accomplish this.

All available means of propaganda must be used to find a way out of this situation. Propaganda, public opinion, the press, and the radio have not been mobilized to aid recruitment. So far, there has been no printed information or leaflets for worker recruits. Both recruiting officers and recruits depend on verbal understanding of working conditions at the construction sites.

As a matter of fact, each construction site has its own manpower reserves. Krakow complains about the instability of its manpower, especially of the high turnover at the construction sites. If turnover were reduced, recruitment would cease to be a major problem.

The deplorable condition of workers' living quarters at Nowa Huta is notorious. The wojewodztwo committees have been instrumental in transferring the operation of the workers' living quarters to the local communal enterprises. It will be easier to check and control the local authorities and wojewodztwo committees through the local communal enterprises. However, the situation has not altered perceptibly.

Have we considered the welfare of our workers? Previous reports indicated that milk bars and commissaries open for business an hour later than the workers report for work. Is it so strange, then, that they leave their jobs in droves every day to buy supplies which are often located several kilometers away from their work?

How successful has the application of teamwork on large construction projects been? We do not use even the simplest organization of bricklaying teams, despite the fact that the technique is well known and can be universally applied with ease.

Has political propaganda succeeded at Nowa Huta? To be sure, last summer currency reform posters flooded the area. I do not intend to imply that nothing changes for the better, but merely to point out that they change at a very slow pace. The work of party organizations, vocational groups, and management has not kept up with the most pressing needs.

The training program at Nowa Huta may look better than elsewhere. Director Wirski was famous for his initiation of training programs. He trained bricklayers. But although Nowa Huta trains bricklayers, it does nothing about training electricians, fitters, assemblers, and so on. Evidently Nowa Huta thinks these will be supplied by outside sources. Nowa Huta ought to be the school which supplies all Poland with qualified workers in these fields.

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The MEP (Ministerstwo Budownictwa Przemyslowo, Ministry of Industrial Construction) follows the line of least resistance too often. This year it needed several thousand qualified electricians. It did not think of establishing its own training schools. Instead, it demanded these electricians from the Ministry for the Construction of Cities and Settlements, from village electrification sections, and from other ministries having construction enterprises.

Nowa Huta also lacks good management and suitable organization. This is the major weakness of all our large Polish construction projects. The building and organization cadres grow too slowly for such projects as Nowa Huta or even, for that matter, Czestochowa. These demand rapid development and call for an expanded scale of training staffs of directors and organizers.

From the viewpoint of organizations -- especially in our present situation -- large-scale construction presents a difficult and complicated problem. We must supply the technical documentation, materials, training schools for workers, and the means of recruitment. We must synchronize the organization of equipment, the supply of machines, and the activation of production.

These difficult tasks are divided between the directors of the various enterprises and the directors of the construction industry. For example, for the chemical plants in Jelenia Gora, scores of subcontractors have been mobilized. This was done despite the fact that most of the equipment is supplied by imports. At present, the outstanding drawback is the lack of cooperation between the contractors and the subcontractors and the absence of any real organization in their work. The best guarantee of plan fulfillment on constructions comes when a contractor performs his own functions with his own manpower. Subcontractors subject to this same ministry, the MEP, are inclined to lag behind the plan requirements. Subcontractors subject to some other ministry are even less efficient.

Technical documentation is often delayed and this obstructs construction. Sometimes, the lack of pipes, cable, or some special steel becomes evident at the last minute. This happens because demand for them was not foreseen in the supply plan, or else the work sketches or technical projections were not ready on time.

Stop-gap methods mentioned in President Bierut's report are used by suppliers. Very often, materials produced for one construction are deployed to another whose need is immediate. Naturally, this does not give good results. Our suppliers must raise the level of their work and, above all, must use discretion.

Tardiness in construction plan fulfillment is not always the result of objective conditions. The crux of the matter is that none of us has learned how to direct large-scale construction. This applies to the MEP, as well as to the wojewodstwo committees.

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